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CLAIMS:

1. A coupling member including :
a body portion formed with a hook;
5 a closure shaft slidably mounted in a first axial direction in the body for movement between open and closed positions; and
a locking member carried by the closure shaft and being movable between locked and unlocked positions, the arrangement being such that when the locking member is in its locked position, it prevents movement of the closure shaft from its closed position.
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2. A coupling member as claimed in claim 1 wherein the locking member includes a locking pin which is slidably mounted in the closure shaft, the pin having a head and wherein the body portion includes a slot or keyway, the arrangement being such that the locking pin needs to be moved to its unlocked position so that the pin can then move in the
15 slot or keyway when the closure shaft moves.
3. A coupling member as claimed in claim 2 wherein the hook has a terminal portion which is generally transverse to the direction of movement of the closure shaft.
- 20 4. A coupling member as claimed in claim 3 wherein the terminal portion includes a recess which receives a free end of the closure shaft in its closed position.
5. A coupling member as claimed in claim 4 wherein the recess is a blind recess.
- 25 6. A coupling member as claimed in claim 4 wherein the recess is in the form of a bore which passes through the terminal portion.
7. A coupling member as claimed in any one of claims 4, 5 or 6 wherein the closure shaft is biased towards its closed position.
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8. A coupling member as claimed in claim 7 wherein the closure shaft is biased

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towards its closed position by means of a compression spring.

9. A coupling member as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 8 wherein the locking pin is biased towards its locked position.

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10. A coupling member as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 9 including an actuator which is mounted for sliding movement on the body in a second direction parallel to said first axial direction, the actuator having a recess in which the head of the locking pin is slidably mounted in a third direction which is transverse to said second direction.

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11. A coupling member as claimed in claim 10 including a compression spring which biases the locking pin towards its locked position, the arrangement being such that the user, in use, presses the head inwardly relative to the actuator so that the locking pin moves in said third direction to its unlocked position so that the user can then slide the actuator in
15 said second direction which moves the closure shaft in said first direction from its closed position to its open position.

12. A coupling member as claimed in claim 11 wherein an inner end of the locking pin includes a locking projection which is seated in a locking recess formed in the body
20 portion when the locking pin is in its locked position and wherein the locking projection is clear of said locking recess when the locking pin is in its unlocked position.

13. A coupling member as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 12 wherein the body portion is an integral body.

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14. A coupling member as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 12 wherein the body portion is composed of a number of components and includes means for fixing the components together.

30 15. A coupling member as claimed in claim 14 wherein the body portion includes first and second complementary moulded body parts, which define a guideway for constraining

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the closure shaft for movement in said first direction.

16. A coupling member as claimed in claim 15 wherein the complementary moulded body parts define a recess for receipt of a main compression spring, a free end of which
5 acts against an inner end of the closure shaft.

17. A coupling member as claimed in claim 10 wherein the body portion includes first and second complementary moulded body parts, wherein the complementary body parts are formed with first projections which cooperate with second projections formed on the
10 actuator to define a key and keyway for constraining the actuator to sliding movement relative to the body portion in said second direction.

18. A coupling member as claimed in any one of claims 14 to 17 wherein the body portion includes first and second side plates which are disposed laterally relative to said
15 first and second moulded body parts.

19. A coupling member as claimed in claim 18 wherein the means for fixing the components together include a plurality of rivets which extend between the side plates and clamp the moulded body parts therebetween.
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20. A coupling member as claimed in claim 18 or 19 wherein the moulded body parts are injection moulded from plastics material and the side plates are metallic.

21. A coupling member including:
25 a body portion formed with a hook having a terminal portion;
a closure shaft slidably mounted in the body for movement between open and closed positions;

biasing means for biasing the closure shaft towards its closed position characterised in that the terminal portion of the hook includes a recess or bore and wherein a free end of
30 the closure shaft is located in the bore or recess when it is in its closed position.